

# **California High School Exit Examination**

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## **Notifying Parents/Guardians for the 2003–04 School Year**

### **Assistance Packet for School Districts and Schools**

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prepared by the  
California Department of Education

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# Table of Contents

Introduction .....	2
CAHSEE Legal Requirements for Parent/Guardian Notification .....	3
Facts about the CAHSEE .....	5
Sample Parent/Guardian Brochure .....	7
Sample Parent/Guardian Brochure (Spanish Version) .....	9
Sample Notification Flyer for Middle and High Schools .....	11
Sample School/Home Newsletter Insert .....	12



# Introduction

Notifying parents of the requirement for their student to pass the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) is an important part of ensuring student success on this exam. The more information a school district provides to parents, the more opportunity parents have to participate in preparing their student for success on the exam and the more connected parents feel to the school district.

This section provides: (1) the legal requirements for notifying parents of the CAHSEE, (2) a sample parent brochure, (3) a sample notification flyer for middle and high schools, and (4) a sample notification school/home newsletter insert.

These sample materials may be used as models for notifying parents of the CAHSEE. School districts must select CAHSEE administration dates from the designated test dates set by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Information in parent/guardian brochures, flyers, and newsletter inserts have been updated to include information regarding the State Board of Education decision to postpone the date upon which students must meet the CAHSEE requirements to graduate, the changes to the CAHSEE test content (blueprints), and the new Certificate of Accomplishment.

School districts with non-English speaking parent populations should consider translating CAHSEE correspondence into other languages. The sample parent brochure is available in Spanish on the CAHSEE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee>.

The following table contains the dates on which the CAHSEE may be offered during the 2003–04 school year. An administration for all tenth grade students is necessary to meet both CAHSEE and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements for high school. The tenth grade administration must be offered in either February or March 2004. School districts may provide tenth graders who were absent during the census administration with a make-up opportunity in March or May 2004. The dates selected by a school district should be inserted into the tables in the sample materials that appear in this packet. Microsoft Word versions of the sample materials can be downloaded from the CDE Web site so specific school district test dates can be inserted.

## 2003–04 Designated CAHSEE Testing Dates

English-Language Arts	Mathematics
Tuesday	Wednesday
February 3, 2004	February 4, 2004
March 16, 2004	March 17, 2004
May 11, 2004	May 12, 2004



# CAHSEE Legal Requirements for Parent/Guardian Notification

On July 9, 2003, the State Board of Education (SBE) took the following action in regard to the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE):

- (1) In accordance with *Education Code* Section 60859, and having reviewed the report of the independent study of the CAHSEE, the SBE determined that standards-based instruction has not been implemented sufficiently for an examination of this nature; and
- (2) Therefore, the SBE delayed the date upon which each pupil completing grade 12 is required to successfully pass the CAHSEE as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation or a condition of graduation from high school to the 2005–06 school year.

The main motion was approved by the SBE. This action means that students graduating in the classes of 2004 or 2005 will no longer have to meet the CAHSEE requirement to get a high school diploma. Students graduating in 2006 and after will have to satisfy the CAHSEE requirement.

## ***Education Code* Section 48980 (added March 29, 1999; SB 2, Chapter One) Requiring Parent/Guardian Notification**

“(a) At the beginning of the first semester or quarter of the regular school term, the governing board of each school district shall notify the parent or guardian of its minor pupils regarding the right or responsibility of the parent or guardian under sections 35291, 46014, 48205, 48207, 48208, 49403, 49423, 49451, 49472, 51240, and 51550 and Chapter 2.3 (commencing with Section 32255) of Part 19.

(b) The notification also shall advise the parent or guardian of the availability of individualized instruction as prescribed by Section 48206.3, and of the program prescribed by Article 9 (commencing with Section 49510) of Chapter 9.

(c) The notification shall also advise the parents and guardians of all pupils attending a school within the district of the schedule of minimum days and pupil-free staff development days, and if any minimum or pupil-free staff development days are scheduled thereafter, the governing board shall notify parents and guardians of the affected pupils as early as possible, but not later than one month before the scheduled minimum or pupil-free day.

(d) The notification also may advise the parent or guardian of the importance of investing for future college or university education for their children and of considering appropriate investment options including, but not limited to, United States Savings Bonds.



(e) Commencing with 2004 [now 2006 per SBE action]...each pupil completing the 12th grade will be required to successfully pass the high school exit examination administered pursuant to Chapter 8 (commencing with Section 60850) of Part 33. The notification shall include, at a minimum, the date of the examination, the requirements for passing the examination, and shall inform the parents and guardians regarding the consequences of not passing the examination and shall inform parents and guardians that passing the examination is a condition of graduation...”



# Facts about the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

State law, enacted in 1999, authorized the development of the CAHSEE, which students in California public schools would have to pass to earn a high school diploma, beginning with the Class of 2004. The law also authorized the State Board of Education (SBE) on or before August 1, 2003, to delay the consequences of the CAHSEE (*California Education Code* sections 60850–60859). On July 9, 2003, the SBE announced that the consequences of the CAHSEE would be postponed for two years, making the Class of 2006 the first class now required to pass the CAHSEE to earn a high school diploma.

The purpose of the CAHSEE is (1) to improve student achievement in high school; and (2) to help ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate competency in state academic content standards adopted by the SBE.

There are two parts to the CAHSEE: English-language arts and mathematics. By law, each part is to address state academic content standards adopted by the SBE.

## Student Participation

- Beginning in the 2005–06 school year, students must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement in addition to meeting district and state requirements for graduation.
- Beginning with the Class of 2006, all tenth-grade students are required to take the CAHSEE once in grade ten in February or March, with a make-up in March or May. Students may be given up to five additional opportunities to retake the examination. Only the part(s) not passed must be taken again.
- Students who are English learners are required to take the CAHSEE in grade ten with all other tenth grade students. The school district may defer the requirement that these students pass the CAHSEE for up to 24 calendar months of enrollment in California public schools, but they still must take the CAHSEE during this period of time. The students must complete six months of instruction in reading, writing, and comprehension in English during these 24 months, but they still are required to take the CAHSEE during this time. All students must pass the CAHSEE in English to receive their high school diploma.
- Students with disabilities must meet the CAHSEE requirement to receive their high school diploma. These students must be permitted to take the test with any accommodation or modification specified in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan for the CAHSEE, for standardized testing, or for use during classroom instruction and assessments.
- Students who take the CAHSEE with modifications will not receive a valid score and must complete a waiver to meet the CAHSEE requirement. At the request of a parent/guardian a school principal shall submit to the school district governing board a request for a waiver of the requirement to successfully pass the CAHSEE. This waiver is only available for a student with a disability who has taken the CAHSEE with modifications that alter what the test measures and has received the equivalent of a passing score on one or both parts of the CAHSEE. The school district board may waive the requirement to pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE if the student has met the requirements listed in *California Education Code* Section 60851(c).



# Facts about the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) *continued*

- Beginning with the 2000–01 school year, school districts are required to send notification about the CAHSEE to parents/guardians of grade nine students at the beginning of the first semester or quarter of the regular school term and each year thereafter. Transfer students are to receive notification at the time they transfer.

## Test Content

- The English-language arts part of the CAHSEE addresses state academic content standards through grade ten. The examination consists of multiple-choice questions and a writing task. The reading and decoding portion covers vocabulary, informational reading, and literary reading. The writing portion covers writing strategies, applications, and conventions. The examination has one written response either to literature or an informational passage or to a writing prompt.
- The mathematics part of the CAHSEE addresses state academic content standards in grades six, seven, and Algebra I. It includes statistics, data analysis and probability, number sense, measurement and geometry, mathematical reasoning, and algebra. Students also must demonstrate strong computational skills and a foundation in arithmetic, including working with decimals, fractions, and percentages. The math examination consists of all multiple-choice questions.

## Reporting/Using Results

- Within eight weeks after the CAHSEE administration, school districts are sent two copies of the Student and Parent Report for each student who took the examination.
- When districts receive individual student reports of the CAHSEE, they are to distribute one copy to parents/guardians and place the other copy in the student's permanent record.
- The passing score for the mathematics portion of the exam is approximately 55 percent of the questions correct or a scale score of 350. The passing score for the English-language arts portion of the exam is approximately 60 percent or a scale score of 350.
- The California Department of Education (CDE) posts school, district, county, and statewide results for the mathematics and English-language arts parts of the CAHSEE annually in late September or early October on the Internet.
- School districts must provide supplemental instruction aligned to the state academic content standards to assist students who do not pass the exam. This instruction is to include summer school for seniors who do not pass.

## More Information

- Additional information about the CAHSEE is posted on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee>.

## ***Special Letter to Parents/Guardians***

**S**tudents scheduled to graduate in 2004 or 2005 will no longer be required to pass the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) to receive a diploma. At its July 2003 meeting, the State Board of Education voted to postpone the passage of this exam as a diploma requirement to the Class of 2006.

State Board action was based on findings of an independent evaluation, completed in May 2003, the findings conclude:

- ▶ The CAHSEE is a high quality test.
- ▶ CAHSEE has led to (1) dramatically increased coverage of the state academic content standards at the middle and high school levels; and (2) development of new courses to provide help for students who have difficulty mastering these standards.
- ▶ Many factors suggest that the effectiveness of standards-based instruction will improve for each succeeding class after the Class of 2004.

## ***A State Standard for High School Graduates***

**S**tate law passed in 1999 (*California Education Code* sections 60850 and 60851) authorized the development of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which students in public schools must pass to graduate with a diploma. The purpose of this graduation requirement is to:

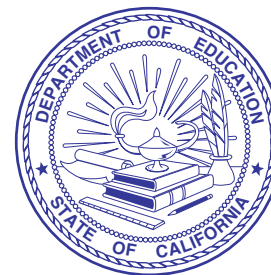
- ▶ Help improve student achievement in high school.
- ▶ Make sure that graduates can demonstrate competency in state academic content standards for reading, writing, and mathematics.

The CAHSEE has two parts, English-language arts and mathematics. Both parts must be passed for a student to be eligible for a high school diploma. The English-language arts part of the CAHSEE covers state academic content standards through grade ten. The mathematics part covers standards in grades six and seven and Algebra I.

The CAHSEE is also used to meet state and federal requirements for school accountability.

# **Attention Parents/Guardians**

## ***Important Announcement About...***



## ***The California High School Exit Examination***

***California Department  
of Education***

***October 2003***

# Questions and Answers for Parents/Guardians

## ***Will students in the classes of 2004 and 2005 who worked hard to pass the CAHSEE be acknowledged?***

Students in the classes of 2004 and 2005 who satisfied the CAHSEE requirement may be awarded a state Certificate of Accomplishment. This Certificate will signify that students passing this examination have demonstrated competency in reading, writing, and mathematics, in alignment with state academic content standards.

## ***What happens to students in the classes of 2004 and 2005 who have not yet passed one or both parts of the test?***

All students in the classes of 2004 and 2005 are to be commended for participating in the CAHSEE. These students are no longer required to pass the CAHSEE as a state graduation requirement. School districts may give the CAHSEE to those students who still want to pass the exam to get the certificate.

## ***Does the postponement of the CAHSEE to 2006 change other requirements for graduation?***

No. All students in the classes of 2004 and 2005 must meet current state and/or school district requirements to receive a high school diploma. Students planning to enter a college or university must meet additional requirements.

## ***Does the law allow the State Board of Education the option to postpone the CAHSEE requirement again?***

No. State law (*California Education Code* Section 60859) provided one opportunity for the State Board to postpone the CAHSEE requirement. The law also required that the decision be based on results of an independent evaluation of the test development process and implementation of standards-based instruction in California public schools.

## ***When will the CAHSEE be given again?***

The next testing dates are scheduled for February or March 2004 for tenth graders only.

## ***What are the February or March 2004 testing dates at my student's high school?***

The California Department of Education (CDE) has provided each school district with two testing options for February or March 2004. There also will be an additional date for make-ups. Students and parents will be informed of the testing dates for their school as soon as local plans are finalized.

## ***What happens if tenth graders do not pass the CAHSEE in February or March 2004?***

Students who do not pass one or both parts of the CAHSEE in February or March 2004 will have up to five opportunities to retake the exam. This will include one final time after grade twelve when all other graduation requirements have been met. Students retake only the part(s) of the exam not

previously passed. The school district must provide additional instruction to assist students who do not pass the exam.

## ***How can parents/guardians help their students pass the CAHSEE?***

Parents should talk with their student's teachers or principal to make sure the school's classes are aligned to state academic content standards in English-language arts and mathematics. Parents, whose student needs extra instruction to pass the CAHSEE, should make sure he or she is enrolled in the special learning opportunities provided at school.

In addition, parent/student CAHSEE study guides will be available for use at home. Study guides will be sent to school districts this fall for tenth grade students and their parents, and the guides will be available on CDE's CAHSEE Web site at the address listed below. Teachers also can suggest ways parents can help their student(s) achieve.

## ***How can parents/guardians get their questions about the CAHSEE answered?***

If you have any questions about the CAHSEE:

- ▶ Contact your student's school office during regular office hours; or
- ▶ Visit the CDE CAHSEE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee>.

## ***Aviso especial dirigido a los padres y tutores***

**L**os estudiantes de escuela pública de California, pertenecientes a las promociones de 2004 y 2005, ya no tendrán que aprobar el Examen de Egreso de Enseñanza Media Superior de California (*California High School Exit Examination*, al que se conoce, por sus siglas en inglés, como examen CAHSEE) para obtener el diploma de educación secundaria. La Mesa Directiva Estatal para la Educación, en reunión mantenida en julio de 2003 acordó posponer la aprobación del examen CAHSEE como requisito de graduación hasta la promoción del 2006.

La acción de la mesa tuvo como base los resultados de una evaluación independiente del examen CAHSEE completada en mayo del 2003. Dicha evaluación indica lo siguiente:

- ▶ El examen CAHSEE es un examen de alto calibre.
- ▶ El examen CAHSEE ha contribuido: (1) a una considerable difusión de los contenidos de los estándares académicos de California en las enseñanzas medias y secundarias; y (2) a la creación de cursos de apoyo dirigidos a los estudiantes que muestran dificultad para asimilar dichos estándares.
- ▶ Son muchos los factores que apuntan a que la eficacia de la enseñanza basada en los contenidos de los estándares académicos estatales será evidente, de manera progresiva, a partir de la Promoción de 2004.

## ***Un estándar estatal para los estudiantes que se gradúan de Educación Secundaria***

**L**a ley estatal, aprobada en 1999 (Ley General de Educación, secciones 60850 y 60851), autorizó el desarrollo del Examen de Egreso de Enseñanza Media Superior de California (*California High School Exit Examination* el que se conoce, por sus siglas en inglés, como examen CAHSEE). Los estudiantes de enseñanza pública de California deberán superar este examen para obtener el diploma de educación secundaria. La implantación de este requisito tiene las siguientes finalidades:

- ▶ Contribuir a la mejora de los logros académicos de los estudiantes de enseñanza secundaria.
- ▶ Garantizar que los estudiantes que completen la enseñanza secundaria dominan los estándares académicos estatales de las áreas de lectura, escritura y matemáticas.

El examen CAHSEE consta de dos partes: una prueba de lenguaje y otra de matemáticas. El estudiante debe superar ambas pruebas para obtener el diploma de educación secundaria. La prueba de lenguaje evalúa los estándares académicos estatales de esta asignatura hasta décimo grado, inclusive. La prueba de matemáticas abarca los estándares académicos generales de matemáticas de 6<sup>a</sup> y 7<sup>a</sup> grado y los de álgebra 1.

El examen CAHSEE se usa también para el sistema de contabilidad académica de las escuelas públicas en California.

# **Atención Padres y Tutores de Alumnos**

## ***Información de importancia sobre...***



## ***El Examen de Egreso de Enseñanza Media Superior de California***

***Departamento de Educación de California***

***octubre de 2003***

# Preguntas y Respuestas para la Información de Padres y Tutores de Alumnos

## **¿Se reconocerá el esfuerzo realizado por los estudiantes de las promociones de 2004 y 2005 que se han esmerado para superar el examen CAHSEE?**

Los estudiantes de las promociones de 2004 y 2005 que superado los requisitos, podrán recibir del estado un Certificado de Aptitud (*Certificate of Accomplishment*). Dicho certificado indica la capacidad que el estudiante ha demostrado en las áreas de lectura, escritura y matemáticas, conforme a los estándares académicos estatales de dichas disciplinas.

## **¿En qué situación se encuentran los estudiantes de las promociones de 2004 y 2005 que no han superado todavía las dos pruebas del examen?**

Se debe felicitar a los estudiantes de las promociones de 2004 y 2005 por haber tomado parte en el examen CAHSEE. El estado ya no les exige la superación del examen CAHSEE para graduarse de la educación secundaria. Los distritos escolares podrán dar el examen CAHSEE a aquellos estudiantes que deseen obtener el Certificado de Aptitud.

## **¿Afecta el aplazamiento del examen CAHSEE a cualquiera de los otros requisitos de graduación?**

No. Para obtener el diploma de educación secundaria, los estudiantes pertenecientes a las promociones de 2004 y 2005 deberán cumplir los requisitos de graduación propios de su distrito escolar y los establecidos por el estado. Aquellos estudiantes que piensan asistir a la universidad después de la secundaria, deberán llenar requisitos adicionales.

## **¿Otorga la legislación vigente, a la Mesa Directiva Estatal para la Educación, autoridad para aplazar la entrada en vigor del requisito que exige la superación del examen CAHSEE, una segunda vez?**

No. La legislación estatal vigente (Ley General de Educación de California, Apartado 60857) otorga autoridad, a la Mesa Directiva Estatal para la Educación, para aplazar la entrada en vigor del requisito que exige la

superación del examen CAHSEE, una sola vez. Si bien, la legislación igualmente establece que la adopción de dicha medida se base en las conclusiones de un estudio externo sobre el proceso de confección y organización de la prueba y sobre la puesta en práctica, en los centros públicos californianos, de programas de enseñanza centrados en los contenidos de los estándares académicos estatales.

## **¿Cuándo volverá a celebrarse el examen CAHSEE?**

La próxima convocatoria tendrá lugar en la primavera de 2004 y a ella se presentarán los estudiantes de la Promoción de 2006, quienes, en ese momento, se encontrarán cursando 10º grado.

## **¿En qué fechas de febrero o marzo de 2004 se celebrará el examen CAHSEE en la escuela de mi hijo?**

El Departamento de Educación de California (*California Department of Education*, al que se conoce, por sus siglas en inglés, como CDE), ha facilitado a los distritos escolares el calendario de exámenes para febrero o marzo de 2004. En dicho calendario se dan dos fechas posibles de examen para la convocatoria ordinaria y una fecha para la convocatoria extraordinaria, a la que podrán presentarse aquellos estudiantes que no hubieran podido hacerlo en las fechas previstas para la modalidad ordinaria. Los estudiantes y sus padres y tutores conocerán las fechas en que se celebrará el examen en su escuela tan pronto como se concreten.

## **¿Qué ocurriría en el supuesto de que un estudiante de décimo grado no aprobara el examen CAHSEE en febrero o marzo de 2004?**

Los estudiantes que no aprueben las dos partes del examen CAHSEE en la convocatoria febrero o marzo de 2004 dispondrán de otras cinco convocatorias para superarlo, incluyendo una última a la que podrán optar una vez hayan concluido 12º grado y habiendo cumplido los demás requisitos de graduación exigidos. Si aprueban una de las partes, la nota les servirá para la siguiente convocatoria y sólo tendrán que examinarse de la parte que hayan suspendido. El distrito escolar debe ofrecer cursos de preparación complementaria para aquellos estudiantes que tengan dificultades para superar el examen CAHSEE.

## **¿Qué pueden hacer los padres y tutores para ayudar a sus hijos a superar el examen CAHSEE?**

Los padres han de preguntar a los maestros de sus hijos, o a la Dirección de la escuela a la que acuden, si las clases escolares del centro están en consonancia con los estándares académicos estatales de las áreas de lenguaje y matemáticas. Los padres cuyos hijos precisen complementar su formación para aprobar el examen CAHSEE deben cuidar de que estos asistan a las cursos de preparación que haya organizado el distrito escolar con dicha finalidad.

Por otro lado, se han elaborado guías de estudio del examen CAHSEE para padres y estudiantes con las que se podrá preparar el examen desde casa. Estas guías se remitirán a los distritos escolares durante la primavera para que se entreguen a los estudiantes de 10º grado y a los padres de estos. Las guías también estarán disponibles en la página dedicada al examen CAHSEE del sitio web del CDE, a la que se puede acceder a través de la dirección de Internet que figura más abajo. Los maestros también pueden aconsejar a los padres sobre lo que podrían hacer para ayudar a sus hijos a superar este examen.

## **¿Dónde pueden los padres y tutores dirigir sus consultas sobre el examen CAHSEE?**

Si tienen consultas sobre el examen CAHSEE, pueden:

- Comunicarse con la Secretaría de la escuela de su hijo, durante el horario de trabajo habitual, o
- Visitar la página web del examen CAHSEE en la dirección electrónica del CDE en Internet: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee>.

## SAMPLE NOTIFICATION FLYER FOR MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS

# California High School Exit Examination 2003–04

## Notice to Parents and Guardians

Beginning with the graduating Class of 2006, all students will be required to meet the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) requirement to receive a high school diploma. This graduation requirement is mandated by state law. All students must first take the CAHSEE in the tenth grade.

### What the CAHSEE Covers

The exam is divided into two parts: (1) English-language arts (reading and writing) and (2) mathematics. All questions are aligned to academic content standards adopted by the State Board of Education. Academic content standards describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade level from kindergarten through grade twelve. Your school district can provide you with information on the academic content standards assessed by the CAHSEE.

### Requirements for Passing the CAHSEE

Students must earn a score of 350 or higher on each part of the CAHSEE (mathematics and English-language arts) to pass the exam.

### Graduation Requirements

Students in the Class of 2006 must meet the CAHSEE requirement as well as any school district requirements to receive their high school diploma. Students with disabilities who may need accommodations/modifications and English learners must also meet the CAHSEE requirement.

### Testing Dates

The CAHSEE will be given at the school site during regular school hours on the dates specified in the table below. As required by state law, students in grade ten only may take the CAHSEE during the (*insert February or March here*) 2004 administration. For students who are absent, a make-up administration will be offered (*insert March or May here*). Students who do not pass the exam in tenth grade will have several opportunities in grades eleven and twelve to retake the part(s) not passed. Students will receive additional instruction, if needed, to ensure success on this exam.

### For More Information...

For the latest information regarding the CAHSEE, please visit the California Department of Education CAHSEE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee>. If you have any further questions about the CAHSEE, please contact our school office during regular school hours.

### 2003–04 Designated CAHSEE Testing Dates

English-Language Arts	Mathematics
Tuesday	Wednesday
February 3, 2004	February 4, 2004
March 16, 2004	March 17, 2004
May 11, 2004	May 12, 2004



# Sample School/Home Newsletter Insert

Students in the Class of 2006 will be the first California public school students who must pass the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) to receive a high school diploma. This graduation requirement is mandated by state law. Students in the Class of 2004 or 2005 are no longer required to meet the CAHSEE requirement. The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate competency in the state academic content standards for reading, writing, and mathematics.

Testing dates for the CAHSEE are designated each year by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The table below lists the testing dates at our school for the 2003–2004 school year. As required by state law, only grade ten students may take the CAHSEE during the (*insert February or March here*) 2004 administration. For students who are absent, a make-up administration will be offered in (*insert March or May here*). Students who do not pass the exam in tenth grade will have additional opportunities to retake the part(s) not passed. Students will receive additional instruction, if needed, to ensure success on this exam.

We will continue to keep parents and students informed about this important examination. Additional information about the CAHSEE is posted on the California Department of Education Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee>.

If you have questions about the CAHSEE, please contact (*district/school contact person*) at (*telephone number*).

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